

# All This and Heaven Too

by Vance Havner

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*Vance Havner's sermon emphasizes the critical importance of making godly choices in a morally decaying society, using Lot's decision as a cautionary example.*

**Duration:** 30:07

**Scripture:** Genesis 13:9, Genesis 15:10, Matthew 6:19-20, Matthew 17:26, Hebrews 11:25

**Topics:** "Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of lost decisions in the Bible. He mentions Abraham and Moses as examples of individuals who made important decisions. The preacher emphasizes the importance of choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoying the temporary pleasures of sin. He also highlights the need to share wealth with those in need and warns against making choices that go against biblical principles. The sermon encourages listeners to make wise and vital choices in order to align with God's will.

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## Transcript

We are thinking tonight about another of the great decisions of the Bible. This time, lost decisions. Last night we thought about Abraham, tomorrow night we will think about Moses, the Lord willing.

You remember it says in Hebrews 11, 25, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin. Proceed. Now we'll take a few verses out of the Old and also out of the New Testament.

Of course, you know you go way back to Genesis for a start here in the 13th chapter, verse 10, And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, as it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, is now come as thunder's o'er, then Lot chose him, all the plain of Jordan. Then Lot chose him.

The old King James way of saying it, and I kind of like that. He's making his own choice, and he was making it for him. And then you go way over to Matthew, in the 17th chapter, and our Lord says, As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.

Verse 26, this is, They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the earth, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, also as it was in

the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

You will observe here that he did not say as in the days of Sodom, not in days of peace and progress and prosperity. The days of Noah and the days of Sodom were two of the most corrupt periods in all human history. Sodom is a synonym for the lowest and the filthiest and the vilest in human degradation.

Sodom was a moral cancer and God operated on it. You will be surprised at how often you run into the word in the Bible. Matthew, 2 Peter, Jude, Revelation, here the word of the Lord.

He was speaking to Israel, but he used the two worst places he could think of to describe his own people. Give ear unto the law of our God. Now the text tells us that they were engaged in perfectly normal pursuits, but something happened.

They were occupied wholly with the temporal and had no rest. Genesis 13, 13 says the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. Judgment was approaching and wickedness was running wild and people were living as though there were no God.

As it was, so shall it be. And this is a perfect description of today. And if you notice, our Lord did not say as it was in the days of Sodom.

Isn't it strange that he just said they were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage? Well, there's a lot wrong with it if it's all that you do. And if you do it to the neglect of God, that is worldliness. And the few who do anymore, they have a new word for worldliness.

But for those who still preach about worldliness, they used to say movies, but all the fundamentalists were going to them. And so it is. When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction.

You know, it's always the other way. That's good news, but sudden destruction cometh. That's bad news.

When you see men's horses, bad news. Lift up your heads. Good news, your redemption draweth nigh.

People never have to talk more about peace and security. We call sin sickness. We forget or refuse.

One day every man shall give account of himself to God. I understand that when Billy Graham was just what was the trouble with Sodom and Gomorrah. We are told this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom.

Three things prior. You remember that in Genesis 11, for the city and the tower in early Genesis and all here, man says, let us build and confuse them. And that's history.

Let us go down and confound the language of history in a nutshell. We're boasting today like Nebuchadnezzar when he said he's not this great Babylon that I have built. We've never been so proud of ourselves with the least reason to be than we are now.

We've made man the center of the universe. There used to be a time when you could stand on a starry night and look up and say with the psalmist, when I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, that what is man that thou art mindful of him, the son of man that thou visitest him. But now in this day of space travel, we say when I can see the other way round about.

Theodore Roosevelt lived at Sagamore Hill. I was up there's a home, which has become a sort of a national shrine now. Theodore Roosevelt's one of my favorite American presidents.

And a visitor came to see him and Teddy Roosevelt took him out on the spacious lawn at Sagamore Hill and they looked at the stars a lot. And then the great American said to his friend, well I think we're down to our right size now, let's go back in the house. Helps to take a look in that general direction.

But while we try to mount up to the stars scientifically, we mire in the swine and we still live in a world under the dominion of Satan. It was pride that threw him out of heaven to start with. The second trouble was fullness of bread.

They had too much. The valley of Jordan was unusually fertile and of course a super abundance of material wealth. As in the days of Lotso in America, our Texan.

When I was growing up all the farm, that day's gone. I heard of an old farmer back in those days who was just barely eking out an existence and driving a rattle trap. And he started down the road and the thing went destitution, insane asylum.

One of the inmates was standing out there with him and the inmate said, where do you live? And the farmer said, down the road. And the inmate said, what do you do? I'm a farmer. And the inmate looked back at this nice institution down at that corner and he said, have you ever been crazy? No, but it beats, he said, it beats farming.

They didn't pay my debt. Millions irrigate and build a house, spend millions elsewhere on reclaiming. You can explain anything in Washington.

I've got an evangelist friend that in the summertime was holding our heads and our hands. And they do come out with some of the craziest things. The other day, they got out a booklet on constructive manner than today.

That's so true. Work is a blessing as things stand now. An abundance of idleness occurs to cause the more crime and violence and any other factor.

I suppose Sweden is one of the most affluent nations today. More alcoholics, more suicides than Ireland, which is a poor country, really. Juvenile delinquency.

When they work, they don't have enough time to get in trouble. Said his daddy wanted one. His daddy said, what for? The holy day has become a holiday.

So when you break that, Bishop Moore said it used to be the Lord's day and now it's the weekend. Now with these lengthened holidays, we have a problem in the church, as you know. My own denomination in Kansas City a few years ago passed a new principle, and they said, and I don't think most of my crowd even know it's in the book there, the Lord's day should be employed in exercise of wordly refraining from worldly amusement and with two exceptions, works of necessity.

I have not been able to feed in Sunday football as a work of necessity, and everybody knows it's not a work of mercy. Yet we say that's where we stand. Then Sodom, of course, had the vilest form as a synonym for homosexuality.

We have more Sodomites now than in all history. When I was up in Calvary Church, New York, in some meetings, Captain Jensen, retired deputy inspector of the New York City Police Department, a real Christian with a tremendous testimony, took Miss Hebner and me one night to church, and we drove through Central Park, and he told us about some of the characters. That was his beef for a while.

I wouldn't have believed it if it hadn't been Captain Jensen telling us about what queer, weird wrecks of humanity infest that area. You wouldn't believe that humanity could sink that low, but it breaks out in the upper crust today, and today the Sodomites demand that they be accepted as normal. It's part of the new morality that makes and subsidizes it by the I'm not surprised that Sodom was destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven.

It was a peculiar fire. It may be that God released a little bit of nuclear destruction that horrifies us now in the Adam age, because Peter does tell us that the heavens and that day when the heavens shall pass away and the elements melt, the fervent heat, the earth and the works thereof. All that sounds today and how fitting that our Lord should say, I do, the days of Lot.

He just said it in the days of Noah when the earth was destroyed, and earth awaits the stars of judgment, the best way. What are we going to do in Sodom? Here we are against the night when you're up at Ben Lippin, and the Christ Jesus within you that can be counted on. Lot is a classic attempt first towards just giving him a little more time.

That's why I believe in crying out against sin in its incipiency. Nip it in the bud. There are some things today that are not terribly bad in themselves, but you young people, please listen to me.

You must judge a thing not always by what it is, but by which way it's going, and what is the trend of it, and where will I go if I go with it? The trend of it, not by its immediate status. Never. Young people come up again and again and say, well, what's wrong with this? What's wrong with that? Can I dance? What's wrong with rock? What's wrong with all these things? And the trouble is, they've already got off on the wrong foot, because instead of saying, how much like Jesus can I be, and how little I can still be a Christian? Well, that's no way to ask it.

And when you get down to business, you'll ask, how much like my Lord can I be? You won't ask some of these Christians. But how near the precipice can I walk without? Why don't we ask? But not just that. No, no.

The worst enemy that Jesus ever had on earth, and he said, accept your repentance before you, and he said it to religious people. Just to succeed that of the scribes and Pharisees. They were separated.

They wouldn't even. And so I'm not begging you to go around pride yourself on how you can imitate Jesus. No, not that.

Because there's only been one Christian life, and that's Christ himself, and the life he lived. There's only been one. But it's reproduced again and again as he lives in our hearts and in our lives.

And that's it. That's the life. I never would have known that the Lord was a righteous man if it hadn't been for the New Testament, because it says over there that he was vexed with the filthy conversations of the wicked, for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds.

But he had no business settling in Sodom to begin with. Now, geographically, we all have to live in Sodom. You can't run from it, and the Lord doesn't want us to run from it, because 1 Corinthians 5, 9, 10 says, not company with fornicators, yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the world.

We can be in it, but not of it, and John 17 sets you forever straight on how to line up with regard to the world. Jesus said we've been saved out of it. We're still in it, but we're not of it.

But we're excused for settling in Sodom. If you think that you're not in Sodom, check the theaters in any magazine racks. The other day, Lucille Ball said, it shocks me that I'm not.

She can say that. And Gloria Swanson, who was a famous movie actress, and she's in her 70s now, the violence, the cruelty, the despair. Now, they know that road, and if they can see that way, what am I to think about people who take up for all this business, and claim to be Christians, and true to the word of God.

Take a tip from Lucille Ball. Gloria Swanson, I don't often say that from the pulpit. Politically, and socially, and educated.

God of this age, I've said in going to be critical of people for his name. And if you look at Genesis 2, everybody in here lives by making choices. Every day of your life, you make decisions from dawn to dark.

Some of them are insignificant, and they're always making decisions. Why, it'd be interesting to check someday just how many decisions you make in one day. Some of them are rather small, but decisions.

Decisions. If you make your foolish choice, like love, choose yourself. He chose him.

Explain it, George. Are you going to let God choose for you? There are some profound decisions that we have to make from time to time. And there's a difference between just bull-headedly and stubbornly making up your mind to do it, and to say, Lord, what do you think about it? And if you will make your will known to me, I'll make it ditto and sign the bottom of the contract.

What does God want? Do I speak to somebody here tonight that if you're perfectly honest with yourself, you know good and well that you've made a decision that Jesus never has okayed? And you may be trying to live a Christian life, and that thing keeps bugging you because you have chosen for yourself what God never chose for you. The man who walks with God can afford to let the men of this world make their choice. Oh, I like that same passage there in Genesis.

It says that after Lot made his choice, the Lord turned around to old Abraham and said, now he's made his, you and I'll have a place where you are northward, and for all the land which thou seest of thee will I give it to thine. If you let God make yours, the meek shall inherit the earth. Somebody said that's the only one in some of these fashionable areas, and I feel very pretty alone.

I'd like to walk on, and I start that. Keep out. And I say, that's all right.

You can have it a while, for at least on this place. Father, if there's somebody who has slipped in here tonight who does not belong to Jesus, may the Holy Spirit speak to them tonight and right now and say that if thou cast thy lot with the Lord and make him the master of thy life, what's his is thine. And that's just about everything.

Help us here who claim to be thine own to remember how rich we are. Now, Lord, thou hast never told thy church to get rich, but thou hast told thy church to be rich. We are if we only knew it, because he became poor for our sakes that we through his poverty might be rich.

Thank God for the wealth we have in Christ Jesus tonight, but help us to share it, because we're surrounded with poor paupers who may live in mansions but who have not laid up treasure in heaven, and moth and rust corrupt and thieves break through and steal. And help us to say to them, you better get on the winning side and make your deposit like Paul who said, I know whom I have trusted, and I'm persuaded that he's able to keep the deposit, which is what he really said, against that name. Help us to make sure, Lord, of where our treasures are.

May our choices be thy choices, and when we let thee choose for us, we shall not choose amiss. We pray with thanksgiving in Christ's name. Amen.

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